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DEPARTMENT OF VISITING NURSING AND SOCIAL WELFARE

IN CHARGE OF

EDNA L. FOLEY, R.N.

VACATION SKETCHES

When a splendid gift is generously presented, it would be churlish indeed of the recipient to accept it thanklessly; consequently, when a certain, weary, public health nurse found herself on a Montreal through train, with a trip to Europe and a two months' leave of absence on salary in her pocket, she pinched herself vigorously to make sure that she was really awake and thanked her guiding star for her opportunity. Then she proceeded to thumb-tack a curtain of two thicknesses of wet gauze across the screen of her tourist sleeper to keep out the dust which is so troublesome in July and August. (The gauze does not remain wet but it can be sprinkled occasionally and it does keep out a great deal of dust).

Her reading on her twenty-two hour trip was confined to a Baedeker of London and the report of the twentieth anniversary of the Henry Street Settlement, New York City. Founded in 1893, by Mary Brewster and Lilian D. Wald, both graduates of the New York Hospital Training School, the Settlement makes even a doubting skeptic see how large oaks from little acorns grow, for Henry Street Settlement, with its branch houses, summer homes and camps, large staff of visiting nurses and class and club leaders, has all been developed from the simple establishment on the top floor of a tenement house of two nurses who wished to do their best for the sick in a congested neighborhood. The staff now averages 90 nurses and nearly 200,000 visits were made to 22,168 patients in 1913. Miss Wald has asked for an endowment of one million dollars for the nursing service and more than \$200,000 had been pledged before the report went to press. The report is splendidly illustrated and contains some good charts showing the growth of the nursing service. One ten-year table and diagram shows by whom the patients were referred and during this time physicians reported from one-third to one-fourth of all the patients. This is fine coöperation. Nurses don't need to be told of the influence Henry Street has had on the public health nursing situation in New York nor of its wider influence when the welfare of the nation's chil-

dren was involved, but space forbids this being more than mentioned. Workers who have been stirred to a finer realization of a patriotism which includes people of all nations, rather than citizens of a certain geographical area, by reading Miss Addams' *Twenty Years of Hull House* and Mary Antin's *Promised Land* will want to own this report that it, too, may occupy a place on the shelf devoted to the hastening of the dawn of Universal Brotherhood.

Canada. The Victorian Order of Nurses now maintains a staff of 270 nurses but the sixteenth annual report asks for more. The work is growing rapidly throughout the Dominion and more county district nurses are being placed. The first county nurses were four brave pioneers who were sent to the Klondike in 1898. An account of their work would be well worth hearing. A county nurse has recently been sent to Robin, Manitoba. City public health nurses would like to know how county nurses bear the isolation of such work. Judging from the unwillingness of urban nurses to tackle rural problems, we have the true cockney love of the pavements ever in our midst. Nearly 10,000 of the 281,000 visits made in Canada during the year were in response to night calls. The superintendent's report, by Mary Ard MacKenzie, is a stirring appeal for more preventive work and better preparation for public health nurses.

July 10, Montreal. Visited Miss Lynch, district superintendent of the Victorian nurses, at their fine new home at 46 Bishop Street. The Order now has 65 staff nurses and five district homes. A 41 per cent increase in the number of visits was made last year and the patients represented 35 different nationalities. 4174 infants were born under Victorian Order auspices. The Order also loans nurses for 5 milk stations and has placed 2 nurses for follow-up work at the Royal Victoria and Montreal General Hospitals. The nurses do the city school work.

Had time to see only two hospitals in Montreal, the Hotel Dieu, an interesting institution, dating from 1644, in the care of the Black Nuns and the Children's Memorial Hospital, a new hospital organized in 1902. Its chief interest lies in its site on the side of beautiful Mount Royal and its four open-air shacks. These are built close by in a grove of oaks, white birch and maple where, from May to October, the orthopaedic cases are housed, the sun-light treatment given to many tuberculous sinuses, and excellent results obtained. There is a training school of 18 pupil nurses.

July 11. Quebec, a charming old city from another world. The streets are narrow and the houses old but the tidiness of the French tenants is marvelous. Even in the famous old Rue des Cloches, a

very narrow passage in which shop, stable and dwelling lie side by side, the rooms were clean and the street urchins—beggars all—were tidy.

July 19, Glasgow. Even this city of the dead, as the Sunday quiet makes it appear, is a relief after eight days of fog, icebergs and intense cold. People subject to *mal de mer* should never attempt to describe an ocean passage, but they should be provided with warm clothing, very stout trunks, a tin of oat-meal biscuit and some congenial books. Glasgow is a big, dirty, much maligned city, full of interest to a really inquisitive tourist. The fine old Cathedral dates from the twelfth century and in it one may attend a high-church Presbyterian service, a curious mixture of psalming and the Book of Common Prayer, with the prayer for the Royal Family followed by one for the President of the United States, a sweet courtesy, most welcome to an American visitor.

Marmion's pillar and the door by which he escaped are still pointed out and the church is full of other interesting memories. In the yard, a grave-yard of course, is the quaint old tomb of Dr. Peter Low, the Founder of the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons, dating from 1612; thus inscribed, above a weather-beaten skull and cross-bones,

Stay passinger and view this stone
For under it lyas such a one,
Who cuired many while he lieved
Soe gracious he, noe man grieved,
Yea when his Physick's Force oft failed
His pleasant purpose thus prevailed
For of his God he got the Grace
To live in Mirth and die in peace
Heaven res his soul, His Corps this stone
Sigh passinger and soe be gone.

Close by was another tomb-stone warranted to warn the most strong-hearted.

Ah me I gravell am and dust
And to the grave deshend I most,
Oh painted peice of liveing clay
Man—be not proud of thy short day.

Above the cathedral is the Necropolis, a somewhat popular cemetery, surmounted by a column to John Knox. Wherever one goes in the British Isles, even the most light-hearted cannot fail to be impressed by the monuments to men and women who died for their faith, and the ground in places seemed soaked with the blood of martyrs. The Knox monument was erected centuries after his death but it expresses the veneration in which he is still held by loyal Scotchmen.

In the foreground of the cathedral are the fine new buildings of the Royal Infirmary recently opened by the King and Queen, where one may still see Lord Lister's old ward and operating room and the modest bronze tablet commemorating his discovery of the "antiseptic system of surgical treatment." If the visitor is fortunate, she may also meet the nurse who helped him with his first experiments with antiseptics, now over 70, white-haired, and past active ward duty. She is the guardian angel of the sick nurses who are consigned to her care and as much a part of the institution as the superintendent or its training school.

She was presiding over the nurses' afternoon tea table during our call and made a quaint picture in her mid-Victorian black gown and marvelous cap. White haired people over here incline to stoutness and their caps are most attractive. They grow more elaborate as the person's social position improves and some of them are fearfully and wonderfully constructed. The pupil nurses of the Royal Infirmary wear a uniform of lavender and white stripes, as becoming as it is unusual to eyes accustomed to American blue or blue and white. In the chapel of the Royal Infirmary is a beautiful stained glass window of Florence Nightingale, presented by the Chairman of the Board of Managers, and designed by R. Manning Bell, A.R.A. Miss Nightingale in a dark blue uniform with white cap, bib and apron is holding a quaint old lamp in her right hand and looking out over the people with the clear-eyed gaze of a modern Joan of Arc. The window is extremely well executed. The little white cap seems almost like a halo and no nurse can fail to be stirred by this beautiful tribute paid our profession by the artist. The only regret is that this window is not in a far more conspicuous corridor or ward. Near by is another beautiful window paid for by the graduate nurses of the Royal Infirmary, their gift and tribute to their old hospital.

All about the Glasgow Cathedral are other interesting houses and institutions and tenements that strike terror to the heart of an American, accustomed though she may be to New York's East Side and Boston's North End. Across the road is the old Lord Provend's house, the oldest in Glasgow. Its walls in some places are more than four feet thick. Mary, Queen of Scots, is said to have sat beneath its roof. It would be hard to visit a famous building in Scotland where the unfortunate Mary did not stay. She must have been a great traveler, and she is still the favorite heroine of her native land. Down the street from the Cathedral one sees a fine brown stone building labelled "Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society Founded in 1865," while not far distant the grim, forbidding-looking building on a prominent corner half way

down the High Street announces itself as the "Glasgow Lad's Home." The whole building is literally plastered with large black and white sign-board texts announcing "The wages of sin is death," "How shall we escape so great a judgment," "After death the judgment," "Beware for no man knoweth," etc. The terrors of the final judgment must be so seared into the brains of every unfortunate boy housed in the place, that it is difficult to believe that any public health nurse would have the heart to consign a homeless boy there.

At the other end of the city is Glasgow's splendid art gallery where one may see some fine and famous pictures including Whistler's "Carlyle," Rembrandt's "Man in Armour" and other pictures by Murillo, Turner, Burne-Jones and many more. Nurses not ordinarily attracted by works of art, can't fail to be interested in two quaint old pictures there. One "The Sick Bed" by Edward Prentis (1797-1854) is a small canvas about 20 x 24 inches depicting a curly-headed sick-looking child in a big four-posted curtained bed, glasses, bowls and spoons on a nearby stand, the open Bible on a chair and near by the anxious faced mother sitting with folded hands, patiently waiting. It reminds busy nurses that someone is likely to be "patiently waiting," in their most exciting and interesting cases and presents to a thoughtful observer the family side in a case of sickness. The other picture is "A Surgical Case," by David Teniers, the Younger (1610-1694) of the Flemish school. An interesting patient is sitting in an old-fashioned apothecary shop, the instruments are lying on the floor, ointment jars in bright colors are standing about and an old woman is wringing out the dressing in a large bowl more suggestive of clear starching than surgical work. The bright colors of the clothing and the various articles in the shop make the room far more interesting than the average modern surgical dressing-room.

We visited this gallery on Sunday afternoon and had a good chance to watch the people as they swarmed in and out. The poor in Scotland are extremely poor. Personally they are no cleaner, if as clean, as our poor, but there seem to be so many more of them that the observer is, perhaps, first of all more struck with their dirt than with their physical defects and their listless, almost sub-normal, faces. Many of them are dock laborers who spend hand to mouth existences loading and unloading the big ships along the wharfs, for Glasgow is a famous shipping port. Their wives are underfed, poorly dressed, weak-looking women whose favorite garment is a heavy fringed shawl worn under the arms and crossed over the abdomen in order to hold the inevitable baby, warmly wrapped in its heavy folds. Naturally this burden throws the mother's spine in and her abdomen out, and young women

are misshapen and haggard while the rickety legs of many of the little children make one wonder if this Scottish papoose fashion is not responsible for many later deformities. We saw many extremely ragged children of a type seldom, if ever, seen in American cities and in the tenement districts barefooted women were not unusual, although the excessive drunkenness and carousing, for which Glasgow men and women are so frequently indicted, was not evident during our stay.

July 21. Made twelve visits with the public health nurse, as the Municipal Infant Welfare nurses are called. Never saw such poverty. The houses are chiefly of stone or brick four or five stories high, built close to the sidewalks and entered from inside courts by narrow, damp, dark, stone staircases that remind one of old jail entrances. As a rule two or three families live off each landing. A small toilet in an almost pitch black closet off each entry serves the entire floor. Many that we saw were out of order, for although the Sanitary Department is well organized, it is almost impossible to teach these families how to treat open plumbing.

Whole families live in one, two, or at most three rooms and I saw no superfluous furniture and very little extra clothing of any description. A small sink with one thin-stream faucet and a tiny coal grate built in the wall supplied the water and heat for everything. The odor of moist dirt was everywhere and the lack of even the simplest house-keeping utensils made personal or domestic cleanliness impossible. We made twelve calls between 10.30 and 12.30 in the most congested district in the city and in not one home did we find a noon meal in preparation and saw food, dry bread, in but one room. Newspapers, the indispensable aid of every visiting nurse, were never seen. There were no towels and even to a nurse who had seen visiting nursing in many difficult situations, the conditions were appalling. All honor is due the brave nurses who do splendid visiting and instructive work under these conditions.

(To be continued.)